



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jewel Cave National
Monument

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Jewel Cave National Monument News Release

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Jewel Cave National Monument to Celebrate 100 Years

JEWEL CAVE NATIONAL MONUMENT, S.D. – Superintendent Todd Suess announced today that preparations are underway to celebrate the park’s centennial, beginning with an anniversary celebration on February 9 that will include a special program, free tours, and light refreshments.

On February 7, 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt established Jewel Cave National Monument under the authority of the 1906 Antiquities Act. This created the Monument as part of the National Park System to protect the small but extraordinarily beautiful cave, which became known for the jewel-like calcite crystals that line the cave walls. One hundred years later, exploration has revealed Jewel Cave to be anything but small, as the second longest cave in the world with a current length of over 141 miles.

The centennial celebration will formally begin on Saturday, February 9, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. in the visitor center of the Monument with a special program to commemorate the anniversary. Honored guests and former cave explorers Herb and Jan Conn will present a program on their 21 years of exploration as they mapped over 60 miles of cave passages, beginning in 1959. The caving parties led by this husband-and-wife team made 708 trips into the cave and logged 6,000 hours of exploring and mapping.

Light refreshments will be served following this program. Free Scenic tours will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 2:30 p.m., 3:00 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. The Scenic Tour provides an opportunity to view the variety of beautiful, colorful and rare cave formations for which Jewel Cave is famous. This ½-mile tour is moderately strenuous, following a paved, lighted trail with over 700 stair steps, and lasting approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. This tour enters and leaves the cave by elevator from the Visitor Center. The cave temperature is 49°F. A light coat or sweater and sturdy walking shoes are recommended.

Centennial activities are planned throughout the year with programs focusing on a variety of topics related to the past, present, and future of Jewel Cave. New programs and activities will be conducted daily during the summer. These include guided hikes, Junior Ranger activities for kids, and programs in the Historic Area at the cabin built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

For updates and information about the centennial celebration plans, check the park’s website at www.nps.gov/jeca or contact Jewel Cave National Monument at 605-673-2288.

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